

BUSINESS INNOVATION SYMPOSIUM (E6)
Unique Perspectives of Space Entrepreneurship and Investment (3)

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DIYSPACE: THE RISE OF THE MAKER COMMUNITY & PRIVATE CITIZENS' ACCESS TO
OUTER SPACE

Abstract

Ever since the cancellation of the Apollo program, NASA has faced frequently changing priorities and unclear budgetary expectations. The Agency has become fractured by competition for increasingly scarce tax dollars to support many diverse missions. As a government “brand”, NASA enjoys highest favorability ratings among taxpayers, but the same public frequently overestimates the Agency’s Federal budget allocation by at least an order of magnitude. Why does this discrepancy exist? How can NASA reduce costs of spaceflight? The answers may be found within a growing global community of “Makers”; private hobbyists and tinkerers with creative skill sets, a Do-It-Yourself attitude, and oftentimes an entrepreneurial spirit. Members of this community are successfully developing Earth-exploring technologies including high altitude balloons, fixed wing and multicopter drones, rockets, rovers, satellites, and even undersea submersibles. The global community is actively changing the economics of manufacturing and technology